

Texas Veterans Voice

A PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD ☆ JERRY PATTERSON, CHAIRMAN

SPRING 2012

texasveterans.com



SERVING TEXAS VETERANS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.800.252.VETS (8387)
512.463.5060

VETERANS HOMES

Ussery-Roan

Amarillo, Texas
806.322.VETS (8387)

Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez

Big Spring, Texas
432.268.VETS (8387)

Clyde W. Cosper

Bonham, Texas
903.640.VETS (8387)

Ambrosio Guillen

El Paso, Texas
915.751.0967

Frank M. Tejeda

Floresville, Texas
830.216.9456

Alfredo Gonzalez

McAllen, Texas
956.682.4224

William R. Courtney

Temple, Texas
254.791.8280

Watkins-Logan-Garrison

Tyler, Texas
903.617.6150

VETERANS CEMETERIES

Central Texas

State Veterans Cemetery
Killeen, Texas
254.616.1770

Rio Grande Valley

State Veterans Cemetery
Mission, Texas
956.583.7227

Texas State Veterans Cemetery

at Abilene
Abilene, Texas
325.673.4446

Coastal Bend

State Veterans Cemetery
Corpus Christi, Texas
361.248.4830

Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery Dedicated on Pearl Harbor Day

More than 1,000 veterans and family members gathered in Corpus Christi on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 2011, for the dedication and opening of the fourth Texas State Veterans Cemetery built by the Veterans Land Board. VLB Chairman Jerry Patterson and other officials paid tribute to the men and women who will be interred there.

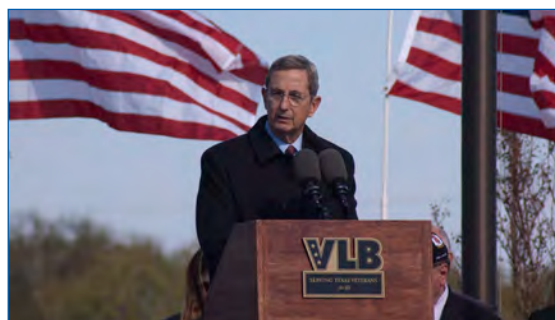
The first interment took place on December 13, 2011, with an additional 26 burials at the site by the first week of 2012. At least 10 additional burials were scheduled before the end of January.

The Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery in Corpus Christi is located on 54 acres donated by Flint Hills Resources through Nueces County to the Texas Veterans Land Board. The cemetery is located on the southeast corner of Carbon Plant Road and IH-37. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded \$8.45 million to build the facility, which is managed by the VLB.

The initial phase of development contains 30 acres and 4,800 gravesites. The cemetery will be expanded as needed and will eventually be capable of providing a final resting place for more than 31,000 veterans and family members.

The cemetery includes a covered, open-air structure for committal services; a visitor's center; a computer kiosk for locating specific graves; an assembly area for special occasions, such as Memorial Day observances; an avenue of flags; and a memorial walkway for future monuments.

The cemetery staff can be reached from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday at 361-248-4830. ☆



Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson speaks to the audience during the cemetery dedication.



Many area veterans organizations took part in the ceremony.



Members of the Knight of Columbus also participated in the ceremony.

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A Message from the Chairman

BY VETERANS LAND BOARD CHAIRMAN JERRY PATTERSON



Fellow Veterans:

Welcome to the latest edition of *Veterans Voice*, the newsletter of the Texas Veterans Land Board. I'm pleased to announce the dedication of two major facilities to serve Texas veterans and their spouses.

The beautiful Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery, located in Corpus Christi, was appropriately dedicated on Pearl Harbor Day. It will provide a dignified place of rest for those who served our nation, some 53,000 of whom live in the Coastal Bend area.

In early November, the innovative Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home was dedicated in Tyler. It's the only

state veterans home in Texas that consists of 10 cottages for residents—each centered around an open kitchen—and one common building.

Veterans Day saw the opening of a splendid exhibit from our Voices of Veterans oral history program. "Every Veteran Has a Story to Tell" is a fascinating multimedia exhibit at the Capitol Visitors Center in the historic Old Land Office on the Capitol grounds. If you're ever in the Austin area, I urge you to go see it—you won't be disappointed.

There are also articles in this issue about the April 24 forfeited land sale and the 2011 Armed Forces Bowl, where some of our Wounded Warriors were guests of honor.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Veterans Voice*. For more information on your benefits, please call toll-free at 1.800.252.VETS (8387), or visit our website at www.texasveterans.com.



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VFW Department of Texas Donates Flags to VLB Final Salute Program

Jerry Patterson, Chairman of the Texas Veterans Land Board, recently thanked the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Texas for their gracious donation of 1,000 Texas flags to be used in the Final Salute Program.

"These flags will be presented to the family of any Texas veteran who, at the time of their passing, lived in one of our eight Texas State Veterans Homes," Patterson said. "This final salute is an honor earned and I thank the VFW for their work to better the lives of our nation's veterans and their families."

The Texas flags will be given to the families of de-

ceased veterans on behalf of the Texas Veterans Land Board.

"Thanks to the work of Roy Grona, department adjutant, and the VFW's more than 82,000 members, our Texas veterans will now get a proper, Lone Star final salute," Patterson said.

The VFW is made up exclusively of men and women who served overseas in a theatre of combat operations and earned a campaign medal.

The Texas Veterans Land Board owns eight Texas State Veterans Homes, in Amarillo, Big Spring, Bonham, El Paso, Floresville, McAllen, Temple and Tyler.



The Final Salute

Veterans Voice Newsletter

The *Veterans Voice* is a free, electronic quarterly publication of the Texas Veterans Land Board.

Anyone can sign up to receive *Veterans Voice* by going to <http://www.glo.texas.gov/cf/newsletter-signup/index.cfm?auto=33>

Additionally, veterans can register with the VLB to receive other program information and updates at

<https://s3.glo.texas.gov/veteran-registration/index.cfm>.

VLB Escorts Wounded Warriors to the Armed Forces Bowl

More than 30,000 people attended the 2011 Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl, held at Southern Methodist University's Ford Stadium and sponsored in part by the VLB.

VLB staff escorted 82 Wounded Warriors from Brooke Army Medical Center and Fort Hood throughout the stadium for behind-the-scenes receptions and events. At half-time, the Wounded Warriors went on to the playing field for a ceremony in which they were recognized for their sacrifices.

Marine Sergeant Andrew Litz, formerly of the Dallas Police Department, and Army Specialist Augustine Pena, each received new homes, courtesy of Operation Fi-

nally Home, a non-profit organization that helps wounded and disabled veterans get their lives back on track by providing new mortgage-free homes. The Litz and Pena family homes will be located in the Bridges at Preston Crossing community in Gunter, Texas. George Fuller Custom Homes and Shadywood Custom Homes are builders in the development.

After the game, the Wounded Warriors were special guests at a concert put on by Gary Sinise's "Lt. Dan Band." Sinise, currently a star of CBS television's "CSI: NY," has long been a supporter of veteran-related causes. His band takes its name from the character Sinise played in the motion

picture "Forrest Gump." ☆



Augustine Pena and Andrew Litz, along with family members, participate in the halftime show.

VLB Forfeited Land Sales

Looking to buy a piece of Texas? The VLB is stepping up its efforts to sell forfeited land to Texas veterans and members of the public. Every April and October, the agency auctions parcels that were returned to the VLB when the owner defaulted on the loan. Any tracts not sold to veterans at these auctions become available to the general public and sold through the VLB's Type II forfeited land sale program.

Last summer, the VLB slashed prices by 25 percent on many of these Type II properties. Some previous bidders and adjacent landowners were contacted about the sales. Following the VLB land auction in October 2011, there were nearly 150 tracts available

across the state. The VLB will consider all reasonable bids on these parcels.

To see a list of available land, go to the VLB website at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/vlb/veterans-benefits/forfeited-land-sales/land-for-sale/index.html>. Texas veterans can apply for financing through the VLB for 7.25% interest over 30 years with 5% down, far lower than conventional land loan terms. Whether you're looking for a lot for your next home, a country getaway, or a lot by the lake, the VLB can help make that dream a reality.

Contact the VLB's Veterans Hotline at 1.800.252.VETS (8387) for more information. ☆

Upcoming Benefits Fairs

Free "come and go" benefits fairs to showcase resources available to Texas veterans!

MARCH 24

Fort Worth

Tarrant County College
Southeast Campus
2100 Southeast Pkwy
Arlington, Texas 76018
10 am to 1 pm

MAY 19

Houston

Reliant Center
One Reliant Park
Houston, Texas 77054
10 am to 1 pm

JULY 21

Austin

Norris Conference Center
(Northcross)
2525 West Anderson Lane
Austin, Texas 78757
10 am to 1 pm

AUGUST 18

San Antonio

Live Oak Center
8101 Pat Booker Rd
San Antonio, TX 78233
10 am to 1 pm

Plan to Attend a Benefits Fair Near You!

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STAY IN TOUCH ONLINE!



facebook.com/txvlb

Be sure to visit our Facebook page and our website for VLB loan rates, current news and photos, and event information. Let us know what you think!



Voices of Veterans "Every Veteran Has a Story to Tell" Exhibit on Display at the Capitol Visitors Center

The VLB Voices of Veterans program was created to capture oral histories of Texas veterans from all eras of combat, from World War II to Afghanistan. Free to any Texas veteran, the Voices of Veterans program provides a lasting legacy for historians, friends and family members, and helps us honor and remember the sacrifices of all Texas veterans.

The mission of the program is to remind future Texans that ordinary men and women, when faced with overwhelming adversity, can accomplish extraordinary things.



Visitors are met by this sight upon entering the exhibit.

Since Veterans Day, November 11th, 2011 (11.11.11), the Voices of Veterans oral history program has been highlighted in a

new multimedia exhibit at the Capitol Visitors Center in the historic Old Land Office on the Capitol grounds.

Entitled "Every Veteran Has a Story to Tell," the exhibit features a short video on the program, multimedia iPad kiosks with actual selections from the veterans' interviews from the program, as well as personal memorabilia. The exhibit runs through September 2012.

The "Every Veteran has a Story to Tell" exhibit was made possible by the State Preservation Board and the Texas Capitol Visitors Center. ☆



One of the iPad kiosk video displays can be seen behind the life-size cutout of Floyd Jackson, a Voices of Veterans interviewee.

EVERY VETERAN HAS A STORY TO TELL.

OPEN NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2012

FREE EXHIBIT

CAPITOL VISITORS CENTER

112 East 11th Street

Austin, Texas 78701

512-305-8400



Now Available!



2012 MILITARY CALENDAR

This exciting wall calendar captures the spirit of America's military forces while remembering those who served. Each month features an inspiring wartime photo, with a special focus on individual veterans featured in the exhibit. Every day reveals a significant, often surprising, event in military history. Purchase online at voicesofveterans.org or in the gift shop at the Capitol Visitors Center.

\$13 each